

Camden Parks & Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes

July 19, 2011

5:15 pm, Washington Street Conference Room

Present: Ray Andresen (chair), Martin Cates (Select Board liaison), Jeff Kuller, Ed Libby, David Olivas, Brian Robinson, Peter Brown

Excused: Molly Mulhern, Sharon Gilbert, Beth Ward.

Ray opened the meeting at 5:20 pm

Peter moved to accept May 17, 2011 meeting minutes as presented, Brian seconded the motion, and it passed 5-0.

Committee Reports

RMRA Redevelopment: Jeff reported that the Building Committee held another open meeting on July 8 and received unanimous support for the revised design proposal from Stephen Blatt. Jeff, Rick Knowlton and Joe Ryan then met with Lynda Clancy of Village Soup, which will run a story about the redevelopment project and the new design in the July 20 edition of the Herald Gazette as a preview for an important community meeting at the Snow Bowl on Wednesday, July 27 at 7:00 pm at which the goal will be to get the community to embrace the new design so that the RMRA can resume fund-raising for the project. Jeff estimated that the additional cost of operating the old lodge along with a new 8,000-sq.-foot building would be about \$9,000 per year, as compared with the cost of operating one larger 13,000-sq.-foot building. That \$9,000 will amount to less than 1% of the total projected Snow Bowl budget once the new lodge is in place. As for managing the construction process, Jeff said that we would probably have two “clerks of the works” – one for the building site, one for the mountain improvements – but that’s not been decided yet. He also noted that the tubing hill has been dropped from the new site plan to save app. \$100,000.

Peter moved that we endorse the new campus design for the lodge as presented by the RMRA, Ed seconded the motion, and it passed 5-0.

US National Toboggan Championships®: Nothing new to report. Meetings will resume in August.

Other Business:

Financial Report: There will be an across-the-board 5% price increase for season passes, rentals, ski classes, etc. at the Snow Bowl for the 2011/12 season. This will be the first increase in three years, during which time expenses for salaries, energy, etc. have gone up by more than 5%, which has been offset by increased usage. The new rates will be announced in August. Although the financial statements show a Snow Bowl surplus of about \$40,000 for the 2010/11 year, the actual figure was closer to \$80,000, reflecting some missing receivables and timing issues re expenses for terrain work and other improvements. Jeff also distributed some Snow Bowl statistics showing a healthy five-year growth trend in participation and programming.

Laite Beach: The project is out to bid for repairing the steps, walls, drainage, and parking.

Sports Fields: The fields are in good shape, thanks to John Novak’s assistance and good weather conditions. There were a couple of shutdown days in the spring due to wet conditions. Leagues and other groups are cooperating on field usage by not overusing one area, but rather using alternate areas when possible.

Mountain Bikers: The Fat Tire Festival this past weekend drew more than 125 racers (up from 75 the previous year) and received a free half-page ad in the Portland Press Herald.

Multiuse Trail: Jeff went before the Planning Board for final approval. Plan is for a 2-mile looped trail that connects with the Land Trust trail. Final design does not include a bridge over the toboggan chute. Biggest concern is erosion protection.

Summer Camp: YMCA is running program again this year, but registration is down from last year. Some feedback we’re getting is that people want a 5-days-a-week program.

Trail Usage: It was suggested that we look into having donation boxes near the kiosks at trail heads on Snow Bowl property for voluntary contributions by bikers, hikers, dog-walkers, cross-country skiers, and other non-paying trail users to help defray costs for maintain the trails and parking lots.

Chamber Repairs: The decking at the Chamber of Commerce building has been replaced, and new gutters and a new front door have been installed. The cost came in under budget, so the plan is to reshingle the front of the building and install new bulletin boards.

Bog Bridge Boat Ramp: State funding has been approved, site work has begun, and new parking spots are being set up on the other side of Route 52.

Tannery Riverwalk: Geoff Scott met with a representative from the National Parks Service to review the total concept of a riverwalk from downtown Camden to Seabright Dam, including the Tannery easement. Meeting went well and there may be another grant opportunity. Riverwalk group did not get a Recreational Trails grant from the state, but can apply again next year.

Stream Drainage: Nothing done yet re drainage problem with stream between fields and parking lot.

Playground: West Bay Rotary has revived possibility of building a playground at the Snow Bowl. Pete will work with Beth on reviewing playground plans, equipment, etc.

Park-Rec Properties: Ed presented a comprehensive list of Park-Rec properties and suggested that (1) we prepare a brochure listing and describing all of them for residents and visitors alike, (2) we place permanent markers at each location identifying them as Park-Rec property, and (3) we conduct a committee tour of the properties to inform all of us about their location, importance and issues. Ed will work with Beth on mapping the properties. Jeff mentioned that Brian Hodges may have a funding source in the Dept. of Tourism for a local or regional brochure. And it was agreed that we will plan to tour some or all of the properties in August or September.

Board Survey: It was decided that each committee member should send his or her individual response to the town committee survey that was recently e-mailed to them, and that we will request a copy or compilation of the responses for distribution back to all of our committee members. The due date for survey responses is August 9.

David moved that the meeting be adjourned, Pete seconded the motion. Approved by all at 7:05 pm.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 10 at 5:15 pm in the Washington Street Conference Room.

Minutes recorded by Ray Andresen